



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Tuesday - December 10, 2002

- ***In the West***, the most significant precipitation in more than a month is spreading into the ***Pacific Coast States***, improving snow packs in the ***Cascades and Sierra Nevada***, and aiding pastures and winter grains in valley locations.
- ***On the Plains***, mild, dry, breezy weather is eroding an already patchy snow cover across the ***northwestern half of the region***, where winter wheat remains vulnerable to potential weather extremes. Meanwhile on the ***southern Plains***, dry weather favors improving conditions in muddy fields and feedlots.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, mild weather is overspreading areas ***west of the Mississippi River***, but a patchy snow cover and cold conditions linger in winter wheat areas from the ***Ohio Valley to the lower Great Lakes region***.
- ***In the South***, a developing winter storm is producing another round of rain to the ***southern Atlantic region***, further delaying final summer crop harvesting, but providing additional relief from long-term drought. Meanwhile, dry weather is returning to the saturated ***western Gulf Coast region***, allowing lowland flooding to diminish.

Outlook: A developing storm over the ***eastern Gulf of Mexico*** will bring rain and freezing rain to the ***Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic States***, while a disturbance trailing the Gulf system will trigger a secondary area of precipitation across the ***Delta and Tennessee Valley***. Elsewhere, high pressure will provide mild, dry weather to much of the ***central U.S.***, while in the ***West***, periods of rain and snow spread from the ***Pacific Northwest*** into the ***central and northern Rockies***. Dry weather will prevail in the ***Southwest***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for December 15-19 calls for below-normal precipitation across the ***northern Plains and upper Midwest***, while above-normal precipitation is forecast for the ***West, Midwest, and southern and middle Atlantic States***. Above-normal temperatures are expected nearly nationwide, with near- to below-normal temperatures confined to the ***nation's southern tier***.

Contact: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB, Washington, D.C. (202-720-2397)